



Minutes

Abbotsford Local Immigration Partnership Council Meeting
April 12th 2018 · 2pm to 4pm
Abbotsford Community Services
Montrose Branch

Present	Regrets
Manpreet Grewal Dave Loewen Kanta Naik Sue Federspiel John Potts Stephen Piper Ghizlane Laghzaoui Nicola Mooney Balbir Gill Camilla Boisvert Harpreet Singh Eyerusalem Abebe Lia Bishop Guests: Shauna Svekla	Ajay Kaushal Dave Sidhu Bharati Sandhu Melissa Giles Allan Asaph Hillary Russell

MEETING OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roundtable Introductions

APPROVALS

Agenda approved

FOLLOW UP

Guest Speaker: Shauna Svekla, Program Coordinator of Career Paths at Abbotsford Community Services.

Top barriers and needs immigrants may face in finding employment in Canada

Language: (Specific to the job)

Credentials

Licensing

Skills upgrading

Work experience

Industry Connections

Job Search Skills

Interviewing and networking skills



Transportation

Childcare – affordability and availability

How do newcomers get connected with Career Paths?

- Referrals from Settlement Services, Employment Services at ACS
- Educational Institutes
- Family and friends of newcomers
- Referrals from employers
- The program posts advertisements and does a lot of community outreach

Available employment services for newcomers

Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants assists newcomers in gaining relevant working experience, find employment or improve employment opportunities within their field, qualifications and educations. The program uses an individual approach that is tailored to meet individual needs and goals.

Employment Mentors objective is “Building Connections for Employment”. Through one-on-one matching relationships, the program connects newcomers with professionals of similar vocational or skilled backgrounds for coaching and advice in accessing the Canadian labour market. From providing informational interviews to attending networking events, mentors assist newcomers in gaining valuable knowledge and an understanding of Canadian workplace culture and employment pathways in Canada.

Abbotsford Works serves immigrants who are unemployed, underemployed or immigrants who are collecting Employment Insurance. This program addresses most of the employment barriers listed above. They also do one on one case management and help with job searching and making referrals to specialized programs which are offered only on referral-basis.

Job Connections for Immigrants assists immigrants looking for work in the retail sector. It provides career consulting and provides information about upcoming networking events which are organized by staff or organizations outside of ACS.

Building Connections with ALIP

Career Paths and *Employment Mentoring* are always looking to collaborate. These can be in many forms: being involved in workshops whether it be providing the space or providing topics which are relevant and important to immigrant workers; offering practicums; information sharing; mentorship; adjusting the agency’s hiring process so that it is more open to international experiences and references.

The Labour Market working group has opportunity to align activities with the employment programs to achieve greater connection and awareness.



NEW BUSINESS

Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) Updates

-There are 11 members of IAT currently. They are all high-skilled, passionate and insightful first-generation Canadians or permanent residents. Project Management has had two meetings with IAT so far and in these two meetings, staff and members were able to review and update the IAT Terms of Reference and familiarize themselves with the work of ALIP. Members have started learning about resources and programs which are currently available to newcomers in Abbotsford in order to start identifying possible gaps.

-IAT members are eager to meet the ALIP council members. Staff is planning on organizing a networking event to bring both groups together.

Action Item: ALIP members decided May 3rd from 4-6pm. Project Management will make the necessary arrangements for the event.

New to BC Event

Sue presents the document Immigrant Demographics of Abbotsford prepared by NewToBC. Council members are shown how to navigate the website (<http://newtobc.ca/>) to look up data and search for information about immigrant services and programs in Abbotsford.

National Local Immigration Partnership Conference in Calgary, AB

Lia and Sue attended this conference in Calgary. Important lessons from the conference include:

- There is no standard LIP Council. Each one is different as they are meant to be unique to their local contexts.
- Some have identified the importance of having an Immigrant Advisory Table to address a knowledge gap in the Strategic Action Plan developed by ALIP Council members. It was nice to see ALIP has already accomplished this.
- There is a Basecamp set up for LIPs across the country to discuss within themselves and share strategies, ask questions etc...executive team will look into joining this platform.
- There will be a call for proposals in 2 years and the funders have expressed they will be looking at how we measure our social impacts. This is important to remember as we review and update our Strategic Action Plan.
- The funders also gave a reminder that LIPs are only involved in providing indirect services. Each LIP is a shared collective owned by each member of the council. It is not an ACS program.



Updating ALIPs' Strategic Action Plan

With 2 years left on our contract and having developed an Immigrant Advisory Table, it is a good time to revamp our Action Plan. Research Policy and Practice to meet after this meeting and start the process to update the Plan.

Action Item: Council set a working session to update the Action Plan on June 6, 2-4pm. Lia will contact Council to confirm this meeting.

Refugee Border Crossing

The provincial government is monitoring the situation and closely looking at border communities. It is looking into what the role of the province is in responding to refugee border crossing from the States.

What is the role of ALIP in supporting these refugees? How do we go about information gathering? It is highly unlikely for these refugees to come to ACS for support. They would likely seek refuge in churches and with friends first. ALIP Council members are asked to keep their ears open and share any information they might have come across with ALIP members.

ROUNDTABLE UPDATES

Festival at Eugene Reimer- Community Empowerment Event

SACRO staffs are supporting a neighborhood festival in support of the Eugene Reimer community. This community has gained a negative reputation in the media and in the greater Abbotsford area due to gang activities. Harpreet to send details to staff who will send it out to members of ALIP.

UFV's Migration and Citizenship Program

Certificate and diploma is approved and the program will be taking in students in September, 2019. Graduate degree is awaiting final approval.

UFV's Global Development Studies Program

This program, which was offered only as a major, is now offered as a minor and extended minor at UFV. If there is any space for internships in one or more of the agencies represented on the council, GDS is always looking to place student interns.

ACS Pre-arrival office in India

This office is playing an important role in attracting entrepreneurs and big investors to Canada. To have this kind of representation in India from BC, particularly Abbotsford, is quite profound.

CLOSE